Renewable energy and town and country planning – IUCN Colloquium Ghent 14/09/10

• Introduction
  ? Renewable energy in Belgium: now 6 % - should be 13 % by 2020
  ? Green energy: 18 % wind energy, < 1 % solar energy
  ? Negative effects: NIMBY
  ? Study 2004: difficulties obtaining planning permission for wind turbines

• Legal obstacles
  ? Solar panels
    ? on roofs: since 2009 (under certain conditions) exemption from planning permission
    ? in fields: since 2009 possible in agricultural zones (60 % of Flanders) → solar-panel fields
  ? Wind turbines:
    ? planning permission required till 2009 no specific zones and no applications
    ? in fields: since 2009 possible in agricultural zones (60 % of Flanders)
  ? Wind turbines:
    ? environmental permit required above 500 kW
    ? environmental impact assessment above certain thresholds

• Measures
  ? Wind turbines
    ? windfarms allowed in agricultural zones (60 % of Flanders) + small windturbines possible for i.e. agricultural or industrial buildings
    ? policy guidelines for the issuing of permits:
      – ministerial circular from 2006: large windfarms > 15 m (mostly public) - more ‘planned’ (‘windplan’) –
      ministerial circular from 2009: small windturbines < 15 m (mostly private)
  ? Measures
  ? Observations:
  ? study 2004: difficulties in obtaining permissions
  ? absence of specific policy guidelines (besides a ministerial circular of 2001, declared non-statutory by the Council of State)

• Results, recent developments, evaluation
  ? Since april 2009: first permits for solar-panel fields granted; increase of windturbines but 8/10 permits for small windturbines refused
  ? Concern about the many applications in agricultural zones
  ? Council of State 08/01/09: circular of 2006 is non-statutory
Renewable energy and town and country planning – IUCN Colloquium Ghent 14/09/10

- Results, recent developments, evaluation
  - Evaluation
    - Increase of possibilities for windfarms
    - The granting of permits may not be based on the circulars → environmental conditions therein not "binding"
    - Importance of other legislation (i.e. nature conservation)
    - Solution of the problems?